

The Future of Government: Lessons Learned from around the World

7 June 2011

- The World Economic Forum's *The Future of Government: Lessons Learned from around the World* addresses challenges facing government in the 21st century
- Report focuses on areas including open government in a world of social media, the fight against corruption and enforcing accountability
- [Read full report](#) and [watch the video](#)
- More information about the World Economic Forum on Europe and Central Asia at www.weforum.org/Europe2011

Vienna, Austria – The World Economic Forum today launched *The Future of Government: Lessons Learned from around the World* in the run-up to the World Economic Forum on Europe and Central Asia. The report which highlights best governance practices will be presented at a high-level dinner with seven heads of state and government, key ministers and representatives from international institutions, business and academia. Participants will address the need for governments to redesign their structures and processes to capitalize on a new set of actors and tools so as to be efficient and effective in today's complex, interlinked and fast-changing environment.

The discussions will focus on the key issue areas of the report: government transformations, open government in a world of social media, governments and multistakeholder networks, fighting corruption and enforcing accountability and sharing lessons learned on how the strategies, structures and practices of governments must change in the coming years, to be flatter, agile, streamlined and tech-enabled (FAST).

[Watch the video](#)

The report is authored by the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on the Future of Government which includes 15 innovative experts and leading practitioners from some of the most advanced governments and international organizations. Professor Jane E. Fountain, Chair of the Council and Director, National Centre for Digital Government, states, "As the world moves forward amid economic uncertainty, a continuing Internet and social media revolution and deep political change, the future of government has catapulted to centre stage as one of the most pressing challenges of the 21st century. On behalf of the council, I am pleased to present this collection of lessons learned drawn from some of the world's most interesting and rapidly developing settings, and from a remarkable and seasoned group of experts."

The report builds the effective sharing of best (and worst) governance practices so as to speed innovation globally. It provides a comprehensive analysis of how the strategies, structures and practices of governments must change in the coming years to be FAST. Several recommendations are highlighted for governments to be more responsive to rapidly changing conditions and citizens' expectations, as well as to build capacity to operate effectively in complex, interdependent networks of organizations and systems across the public, private and non-profit sectors.

"Governments today are operating in an environment where citizens' expectations are communicated through digital means to global audiences in a matter of minutes with incredible ramifications as evidenced by the revolutions across the Middle East," said Børge Brende, Managing Director of the World Economic Forum. "The report includes interesting best practice and recommendations on how governments can best operate in today's interconnected world to better address global challenges."

The authors furthermore challenge governments to integrate two new kinds of metrics to measure government performance designed to accelerate the required transformation of government. The first measures holistic government performance along the four axes defined earlier as FAST. The second set of measures focus on measuring the value of transformation to citizens so as to allow governments to measure and benchmark improvements in “ public value ” from the point of view of citizens.

The report also explores the powerful but, in some cases, controversial concepts of open government and open data, giving examples of how governments can use the power of the Internet, including social media, to transform governance, empower citizens and rebuild the social contract between political leaders and citizens. It also looks at how to find the proper balance between open government and risk management.

Regardless of reform, revitalization and a technological revolution, the reality is that in many developing countries, at least in the foreseeable future, government alone will be unable to develop sufficient capacity to offer basic services to citizens. Yet the experience of the past decades vividly demonstrates that market forces alone will not produce enough public value either.

A range of public-private partnerships and other multi-sectoral arrangements have opened possibilities for value creation and greater efficiency. In this context, the report highlights the potential of social enterprise, an important way to leverage the innovative potential of entrepreneurship for social and economic development – particularly in settings where neither the government nor the market is likely to produce value using traditional means.

The report elaborates on future government architecture (how internal effectiveness and efficiency can be achieved in government operations) and concludes with a number of case studies capturing some of the most important developments in government reform and modernization today in a range of countries and regions including the OECD, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum and the United Kingdom.

“ Although great variations will remain among governments, there are certain globally valid recommendations, best practices and lessons learned as a variety of countries progress towards more networked governance. We will continue to seek to identify cross-cutting areas that are globally relevant and test them for regional variations to get to robust conclusions with global force, concludes Carina Larsfalten, Forum lead on the Future of Government.

The Forum wishes to acknowledge the Future of Government Council Members: Chair Jane E. Fountain, Professor of Political Science and Public Policy, University of Massachusetts Amherst, and Director, National Centre for Digital Government; Guido Bertucci, Executive Director, Governance Solutions International; Gregory G. Curtin, Founder, Civic Resource Group, and Senior Fellow, Bedrosian Center on Governance and Public Enterprise, University of Southern California; Yuri E. Hohlov, Chair, Board of Directors, Institute of the Information Society; Katju Holkeri, Head, Governance Policy Unit, Ministry of Finance, Finland, and Chair, OECD Public Governance Committee; Yasar Jarrar, Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers, United Arab Emirates; James Kang, Assistant Chief Executive, Government Chief Information Office, Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore; Bruno Lanvin, Executive Director, eLab, INSEAD; Beth Simone Noveck, former Director, White House Open Government Initiative, USA; Toshio Obi, Director, Waseda University, and Director, APEC e-government Research Centre; Haiyan Qian, Director, Division for Public Administration and Development Management, United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN); Ohood Roumi, Director-General, Office of the Prime Minister, United Arab Emirates; Larry Stone, Group President, Public and Government Affairs, British Telecom; Aleem Walji, Practice Manager, Innovation, World Bank Institute, for having taken this very important initiative as well as the World Economic Forum Team: Carina Larsfalten, Director, Head of International Organizations & IGWEL; Rabab Fayad, Associate Director, Government Engagement, Global Leadership Fellow; and Brimbelle Grandcolas, Community Manager, International Organizations, Global Leadership Fellow.

Notes to Editors

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